

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system for providing flexible billing in a cable environment can establish billing practices based on tier level of service, quality of service or the amount of network resources consumed. A plurality of tiers or levels of service can be defined by parameters including at least a maximum or peak bit rate or bandwidth for providing services over a shared channel. A plurality of levels or tiers of services are defined by maximum bandwidth or bit rate and a subscriber receives service at that subscribe-to level or at a slower data rate depending on availability of shared bandwidth. Quality of service is maintaining the specified bandwidth, jitter or delay. The amount of network resources consumed may be expressed in terms of the amount of data transmitted or the connect time of a network access device to the network.

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